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NEW HUNGARIAN TECHNIQUES IN VEGETABLE CULTIVATION

In the cultivation of tomatoes, plants are no longer staked. This results in savings in material (stakes, twine) and labor (driving and pulling stakes, and tying) and in increased yield. Over a period of 3 years, yield increased 35 percent in stakeless cultivation, and little difference was noted in ripening.

Staked plants cannot be cultivated by large machines and are cultivated only with difficulty with small machines or horse-drawn equipment. To prevent the fruit of nonstaked plants from touching the ground, becoming dirty, damp, and rotting, the roots of the plants may be tamped, thereby supporting sagging stalks. In large-scale tomato cultivation, and in soil in which the fruit is likely to be easily soiled, the most desirable plant is that which has an upright stalk, such as the Immun species. Since previous methods of cultivation have proved damaging and costly, and resulted in reduced yield, manual cultivation should be adopted.

The present method of tomato cultivation now differs in the density of planting. Plants are now located 30 centimeters apart, with 70 centimeters between rows, instead of the old intervals of 100 x 140 or 80 x 80 centimeters. Close planting also requires adequate pruning. In a hot, dry season, the plants are pruned only once to protect the buds from the sun and to thin the plants. In rainy weather the plants are pruned more often. Plants are thinned when they are young, to reduce crowded area on the stalks. Dense planting, however, produce larger and earlier yields.

Significant increases in pepper production have been effected by similar concentration of cultivation in smaller areas. In the old method of cultivation, a 40 x 40 centimeter area contained 12 pepper plants per square meter, planted in pairs. It has been found more economical to plant 20 pepper plants per square meter. Over a period of 4 years, production has increased 35 percent. Thus, the increased cost of caring for more plants is compensated by increased production. Dense planting also aids early ripening. In tomato and in pepper cultivation especially, best results are achieved with the new irrigation methods.

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